

24<sup>th</sup> September 2022



**To Members of the Personnel Committee**

You are hereby summoned to a meeting of the Working Group to be held on **31<sup>st</sup> October 2022**, at **7.30pm** at Thanet House, 58 London Road, Stroud, to conduct the following business.



Helen Bojaniwska  
Town Clerk

**AGENDA**

1. To co-opt an additional Committee member
2. To receive apologies for absence
3. To receive declarations of interest or requests for dispensations
4. To answer questions from the public
5. To note the minutes of the meeting of the Personnel Working Group on 8th August 2022, previously circulated
6. To receive the Clerk's report
7. To note a report from Hymans Robertson LLP on the 2022 valuation of the Gloucestershire Pension Fund
8. To approve a job description, person specification and salary range for a new Communications and Engagement post
9. To consider potential measures to support staff through the cost-of-living crisis
10. To resolve in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the discussion of the remaining items
11. To consider a report on training needs identified in annual staff reviews
12. To approve changes to job descriptions
13. To approve changes to employment terms
14. To consider a draft staffing budget for 2023-24 for recommendation to Council

*Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (age, race, gender, sexual orientation, faith, marital status, and disability); Crime and Disorder (Section 17); Health and Safety; and Human Rights.*

## Helen Bojaniwska

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**From:** Finance Assistant  
**Sent:** 22 June 2022 10:26  
**To:** Helen Bojaniwska; Liz Dowie  
**Subject:** FW: Gloucestershire Pension Fund - 2022 Valuation  
**Attachments:** Preparing for the 2022 Valuation - Town and Parish Councils Pool.pdf

Kind regards

**Shelley Dyte**

Finance Assistant, Stroud Town Council, Thanet House, 58 London Road, Stroud GL5 2AD  
Mon-Thurs 9.30am-3.30pm, Fri 9.30am-12.30pm  
Tel: 01453 762817  
[www.stroudtown.gov.uk](http://www.stroudtown.gov.uk)

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**From:** TREBILCOCK, Matthew  
**Sent:** 21 June 2022 17:18  
**To:** TREBILCOCK, Matthew  
**Subject:** Gloucestershire Pension Fund - 2022 Valuation

Hello

The formal valuation of the Fund will take place on 31 March 2022, and we are making progress in relation to this.

As you are a participating employer in the Fund as part of the Town and Parish Councils Pool ('the pool'), as part of the formal valuation the contributions you pay to the Fund will be reassessed.

Therefore, I am pleased to share a paper, prepared by the Funds Actuary, Hymans Robertson providing:

- An estimate of the change in the Pools funding position\* since the 2019 valuation
- The outlook for contribution rates and the approach that will be used for your calculations

\*the funding position in the paper relates to the overall Town and Parish Councils Pool (as opposed to the individual funding position for you Town or Parish Council specifically). The Fund employers included in the Pool are detailed in the appendix of the paper.

These early preparations are intended to provide you with an opportunity to engage with us, if required, and provide any information that may be relevant.

Therefore, once you have digested the contents of the report, if you wish to have further dialogue, please let us know, otherwise we will be in contact further as the valuation process progresses.

Best wishes

Matthew

**Matthew Trebilcock**  
**Head of Pensions**  
**Gloucestershire Pension Fund**

**Tel: (01452) 328920**

**Mobile: 07801 580106**

**Email: [matthew.trebilcock@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.trebilcock@gloucestershire.gov.uk)**

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## Town and Parish Councils Pool - Preparing for the 2022 Valuation

A formal valuation of the Gloucestershire Pension Fund (“the Fund”) will take place as at 31 March 2022 and you are a participating employer in the Fund as part of the Town and Parish Councils Pool (“the Pool”). As part of the formal valuation, the contributions you pay to the Fund will be reassessed. The purpose of this document is to:

- Provide an estimate of the change in the Pool’s funding position\* since the 2019 valuation
- Set out the outlook for contribution rates and the approach that will be used for your calculations
- Provide an opportunity for you to engage with the Fund and provide any information that may be relevant.

\* The funding position in this paper relates to the overall Town and Parish Councils Pool (as opposed to the individual funding position for your Town or Parish Council specifically). The Fund employers included in the Pool are detailed in the Appendix.

### Funding Position at 31 March 2021

An estimate of the Town and Parish Councils Pool’s funding position at 31 March 2021 is shown below. This has been calculated using the data and assumptions set out in the Appendix:

Ongoing funding position	31 March 2019	31 March 2021
Assets (£000)	11,169	14,517
Liabilities (£000)	10,159	12,341
<b>Surplus/(deficit) (£000)</b>	<b>1,010</b>	<b>2,176</b>
<b>Funding level</b>	<b>110%</b>	<b>118%</b>

The funding position will be recalculated at the formal valuation when a full reconciliation of the change in funding positions from the last formal valuation will be carried out. At the 2022 valuation the funding position will depend on market conditions, asset values and membership data at 31 March 2022. However, we note the following:

- Asset values have grown with positive investment returns.
- Liabilities have grown with new benefits being earned by contributing employees. Market conditions have also changed which have increased the value placed on the liabilities.
- The increase in assets has exceeded the increase in liabilities leading to an improvement in the reported funding position.

### Outlook for contribution rates

#### Current Contribution Rates

For the three years from 1 April 2020, your contributions were certified to be:

	Town and Parish Councils Pool			
	Primary (% of pay)	Secondary (% of pay)	Secondary (£)	Total Rate
Year ending 31 March 2021	21.1%	2.5%	£0	23.6%
Year ending 31 March 2022	21.1%	1.3%	£0	22.4%
Year ending 31 March 2023	21.1%	0.0%	£0	21.1%

Following the 2022 valuation, your contribution rate will be set for the three years from 1 April 2023:

- there is a worsening future economic outlook (lower expected investment returns and higher inflation) which will lead to upward pressure on the cost of future benefit accrual (Primary contribution rates).
- Secondary contribution rates will be impacted by the improvement in the funding position.
- The net impact on total contributions will vary across employers in the Fund.

**A key objective of the Fund is to maintain stable rates where possible** and therefore this will be considered when calculating your contribution rate.

#### How contributions are calculated

When setting your contribution rate, we will carry out modelling to assess your contribution rate where 5,000 future scenarios are considered. Contribution rates are set to ensure you have sufficient assets at the end of a set time horizon with a minimum likelihood of success.

At the 2019 valuation, the time horizon was 17 years, and the minimum likelihood of success was 70%. These parameters will be reviewed as part of the 2022 formal valuation process.

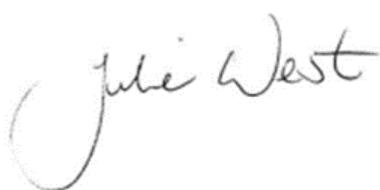
Where contributions are required to increase or decrease, the change will be spread over a three year period.

#### Engagement with the Fund

The calculation of your contribution rate relies on the provision of accurate membership data. Where membership data is missing, a margin may be added to your contribution rate.

Please speak with the Fund in advance if you are aware of anything that will affect your participation or membership of the Fund.

Prepared by:-



Julie West FFA

For and on behalf of Hymans Robertson LLP

## Appendix 1 - Data and assumptions

### Data

#### Membership Data

This analysis is based upon whole Fund membership data at 31 March 2021 provided by Gloucestershire County Council (“the Administering Authority”) on 25 November 2021. A summary of how the Pool’s membership numbers have changed since the previous formal valuation is shown below:

Membership numbers		
	31 March 2019	31 March 2021
Actives	105	121
Deferreds	59	65
Pensioners	64	71

#### Asset Data

The asset share for the Pool has been determined by the individual tracking of each employer within the Pool since the previous formal valuation, based on actual cashflows and investment returns up to 31 March 2021.

#### Assumptions

The financial assumptions used for determining the Pool’s updated funding position are derived in the same manner as the previous valuation but updated to reflect market conditions as at 31 March 2021. For further information, please see the formal valuation report and the Funding Strategy Statement (“FSS”).

% p.a.	Assumptions as at 31 March 2019	Assumptions as at 31 March 2021
Future investment returns	4.2% p.a.	4.1% p.a.
Salary increases	2.6% p.a.	2.7% p.a.
Benefit increases	2.3% p.a.	2.3% p.a.

All other assumptions are set in line with those used for the previous formal valuation of the Fund. Please see the 2019 formal valuation report for the Fund for further details.

#### Town and Parish Councils Pool

The funding position in this paper relates to the Pool as a whole, as opposed to the individual employer funding positions. The employers included within the Pool are detailed below.

Town and Parish Councils Pool - Employers		
Ashchurch Parish Council	Dursley Town Council	Northleach with Eastington Town Council
Berkeley Town Council	Fairford Town Council	Painswick Parish Council
Bishops Cleeve Parish Council	Hardwicke Parish Council	Pauntley Parish Council
Bisley & Lypiatt Parish Council	Hinton Parish Council	Prestbury Parish Council
Brockworth Parish Council	Hucclecote Parish Council	Rodborough Parish Council
Cainscross Parish Council	King’s Stanley Parish Council	Shurdington Parish Council
Cam Parish Council	Lechlade Town Council	Stonehouse Parish Council
Chalford Parish Council	Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council	Stroud Town Council
Charlton Kings Parish Council	Leonard Stanley Parish Council	Tetbury Town Council
Churchdown Parish Council	Lydney Town Council	Tewkesbury Town Council
Cinderford Town Council	Moreton in Marsh Town Council	Tidenham Parish Council
Cirencester Town Council	Nailsworth Town Council	Wotton-under-Edge Town Council
Coleford Town Council	Newent Town Council	

## Appendix 2 - Reliances and limitations

This paper has been prepared for Gloucestershire County Council as Administering Authority of the Gloucestershire Pension Fund, for sharing with the employers in the Town and Parish Council Pool in the Fund. Its purpose is to set out considerations and next steps to discuss funding strategy ahead of the 2022 valuation.

The funding position included within this report has been calculated based on the data, assumptions and methodology included in the previous section of this report. This position could be materially different from the funding position calculated as part of the 2022 valuation process.

This paper has not been prepared for use for any other purpose and should not be so used. The paper should not be disclosed to any third party except as required by law or regulatory obligation or with our prior written consent. We accept no liability where the paper is used by or disclosed to a third party unless we have expressly accepted such liability in writing. Where this is permitted, the paper may only be released or otherwise disclosed in a complete form which fully discloses our advice and the basis on which it is given.

Technical Actuarial Standards 100 (Principles for Technical Actuarial Work) and 300 (Pensions) are applicable in relation to this advice, and have been complied with where material and to a proportionate degree.

This report together with the formal valuation report for the Fund (issued March 2020) and the Fund's Funding Strategy Statement set out the aggregate of this advice.

**Stroud Town Council**

## **Job Description: Communications and Engagement Officer**

**Salary and Grade:** FTE £25,419 (SCP 18) - £28,226 (SCP 23) Pay award pending

**Hours of work:** 30 per week, including occasional evenings and weekends for which time off in lieu will be given

**Responsible to:** Town Council, via the Town Clerk

### **Overview**

Reporting to the Town Clerk this post will lead on delivering the Council's Communications and Engagement Strategy and Action Plan. Working across all areas the post will support the council's strategic priorities, e.g. the environment, regeneration, resilience, wellbeing, community development, community safety, the arts and culture.

This post will work alongside an external communications contractor who supports the Council on public relations and writes press releases and news articles for the Council's website.

### **Job Purpose**

To deliver effective communications and engagement for the Council

### **Key responsibilities**

- Have strategic oversight of external communications across the council
- Lead on the implementation of the communications and engagement strategy
- Implement a resource-appropriate council-wide communications and engagement plan
- Create and develop high-quality content,
- Monitor and report on performance relating to communications and engagement
- Use a range of tools and techniques to proactively communicate and engage with different audiences using identified key messages
- Ensure that the council's communications and engagement activities comply with GDPR and equalities requirements
- Regularly liaise with staff from each service area, to understand their issues, their needs, requirements and any messaging issues.
- Develop and maintain an internal style guide

### **Newsletters and other printed material**

- Produce regular newsletters and eNewsletters, including content produced by the Council's Communications Contractor
- Liaise with the Town Clerk on editorial and layout matters
- Proof read all content
- Liaise with external printers, photographers and graphic designers
- Liaise with Assistant Clerk on delivery
- Ensure Council noticeboards are kept up-to-date, with appropriate and relevant ward information

### **Social media/Town Council website**

- Advise Administration Officer and Project Administration officers on sharing and promoting external content relating to local or strategic issues, e.g. road closures or relevant external campaigns

- Create and/or edit content relating to council business and updates from Green Spaces Team
- Create video content for social media and other channels

### **Projects, campaigns and events**

- Develop and deliver communications and engagement plans for key Council projects, campaigns and events in partnership with relevant internal project managers
- Deliver an annual budget consultation
- Create and/or edit content relating to physical engagement activities (posters, advertising)
- Create and/or edit content for online engagement such as surveys
- Analyze data from engagement/consultation activities and report on results

### **Strategic campaigns**

- Develop an annual media plan/communications calendar linked to the Council's strategic objectives, using appropriate communication channels, e.g. social media, surveys or newsletters
- Write content relevant to each channel ensuring tone, grammar and voice match target audiences
- Analyze campaign data and report on results

### **Community engagement**

- Plan and deliver engaging community consultations and engagement events to support delivery of council projects and to inform strategic decision making
- Design and deliver an annual budget consultation to assess priorities for spending
- Explore innovations in public engagement to support public involvement in decision making
- Research better ways to engage with under-represented communities.

### **Internal communication**

- Provide regular staff briefings to ensure council messaging is understood, including new issues or projects
- Develop and improve internal communications to ensure staff and councillors are kept up to date with latest news from different service areas and projects
- Create and maintain an internal style guide

### **Other responsibilities**

- Deputise for the Communications Contractor in their absence, whether planned or not
- Any other duties the Council may consider appropriate to the post
- The Communications and Engagement Officer may be required to undergo a DBS check in accordance with the Council's Safeguarding policy
- To attend such conferences, seminars, meetings or training courses as appropriate and as required by the Council
- The Town Council may wish from time to time to amend this job description

# Communications and Engagement Officer Person Specification

Area	Essential	Desirable	How assessed
Education	Educated to A-Level standard with 5 GCSEs (including English and Maths) or equivalent NVQ or relevant experience.	Educated to degree level or above in a relevant subject	Certificates
	Communications and engagement training		Certificates
Experience	Awareness of the role of the Town Council and the local government environment	Experience of working in a Council or public facing service	Application form/interview
	Experience of working with a diverse range of stakeholders	Experience of working in a Council or public facing service	Application form/interview
	Experience of using multiple channels to deliver campaigns and tell stories to different audiences		Application form/interview
	Experience of producing website content, newsletters and other written communications		Application form/interview/test
Skills, Abilities & Knowledge	Knowledge of community engagement and consultation techniques		Application form/interview
	Knowledge of offline and digital content and channels		Application form/interview
	Up to date knowledge of communications and public relations best practice		Application form/interview
	Strong IT skills, including using <u>social</u> media, Microsoft products and smartphones	Ability to use publishing tools, Photoshop and website developer platforms such as Squarespace	Application form/interview
	<u>Basic video editing skills</u>		<u>Application form/interview</u>
	Excellent oral and written communication skills		Application form/interview
	Hands-on, practical approach to problem solving		Application form/interview
	Excellent organizational skills		Application form/interview

Area	Essential	Desirable	How assessed
	Attention to detail, especially in copy writing		Test
	Awareness of legal requirements, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and Safety</li> <li>• GDPR</li> <li>• Equality</li> </ul>		Application form/interview
Other	Flexibility to attend evening and weekend meetings and events		Application form/interview
	Ability to operate impartially within a political environment		Application form/interview

## EXTRACTS FROM EXISTING JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR INFORMATION

It is anticipated that these responsibilities will remain, but with additional strategic oversight and support from the new Communications and Engagement post.

Position	Communications and engagement role
Town Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To maintain an effective programme of community development and engagement to enable the Council to both understand and act on the needs or issues that the community experiences.</li> <li>• To make empowering the community central to the way of working</li> <li>• To manage Council communications with the community and the press to generate positive publicity for the Council.</li> <li>• To maintain regular contact with and promote partnership working with key stakeholders (organisations and individuals) in the town and beyond.</li> </ul>
Deputy Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As requested and when required by the Town Clerk to act as a representative of the Council with the District Council, County Council, national agencies and professional bodies and other local stakeholders and recognised organisations.</li> <li>• To work in support of the Town Clerk to deliver a comprehensive communication process including social media, ensuring that it acts transparently and proactively to deliver regular messages to the community about the development of the Council.</li> <li>• To contribute to an effective programme of community engagement by progressing and analysing consultation responses and representing the Council on community partnerships.</li> </ul>
<i>Communications contractor</i>	<p><i>Revised brief approved by Council. In summary covers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>news and feature articles for website and social media</i></li> <li>• <i>a biannual four-page newsletter for delivery to each household in advise the Council on media relations from time to time, for instance in connection with sensitive projects.</i></li> </ul>
<i>Communications and engagement officer</i>	<i>NEW</i>
Green Spaces Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaising with and assisting groups that have an interest in Stroud's green spaces, such as friends' groups, residents' groups and local societies. Our ambition is to expand such activity so the role here is expected to evolve.</li> <li>• Helping to plan and assisting at occasional public events held in or in relation to the town's green spaces</li> <li>• Acting to preserve and promote the good reputation of the Council in all dealings with the public, community groups and others</li> </ul>
Project officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To engage with residents and community groups to develop an understanding of the needs and aspirations of the local community.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To encourage and facilitate partnership working between the council and community groups.</li> <li>• As requested and when required by the Town Clerk to act as a representative of the Council with the District Council, County Council, national agencies and professional bodies and other local stakeholders and recognised organisations.</li> <li>• Contribute to the climate change and carbon reduction objectives of the Council as set out in the strategic plan</li> </ul>
Community Development Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging with people in Stroud in making sense of the issues which affect their wellbeing and empowering them to become active participants in the community.</li> <li>• Leading small projects focused on a specific geographical community or social group.</li> <li>• Helping the council to ensure that its grant funds are distributed equitably and proportionately, including exploring the development of participatory budgeting programmes.</li> <li>• Using recognised community development techniques to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ identify community skills and assets</li> <li>○ ensure that local people have their say, particularly hard to reach groups</li> <li>○ build networks and promote partnership working with community groups and statutory agencies</li> <li>○ plan, attend and coordinate meetings and events</li> <li>○ help to raise public awareness on issues relevant to the community</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Assistant Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing the distribution of the Council's hard copy newsletter.</li> <li>• Managing community displays in the office window and preparing displays for special events, e.g. Christmas tree festival.</li> <li>• Organising (or liaising with other organisers) of civic events including: Annual Town Meeting and armistice/remembrance services.</li> </ul>
Admin Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day-to-day maintenance and updating of the Council's website including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Content management</li> <li>○ Liaison with web developer and host</li> <li>○ Domain renewal</li> <li>○ Search engine optimisation</li> <li>○ Monitoring website traffic (Google Analytics)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Posting updates on the Council's social media in accordance with the Council's Social Media Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ To publicise Stroud Town Council meetings</li> <li>○ To direct residents to Stroud Town Council press releases and articles on the website <a href="http://www.stroudtown.gov.uk">www.stroudtown.gov.uk</a></li> <li>○ To direct residents to Stroud Town Council consultations</li> <li>○ To inform residents about consultations relevant to Stroud town being organised by external organisations, for example the District and Council</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o councils, police or health services</li> <li>o To communicate important information in an emergency, for example flooding or road closures</li> <li>o To promote arts and cultural events in Stroud</li> <li>o To advertise job and contract opportunities</li> <li>o To publicise elections</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designing and setting out leaflets, newsletters (other than About Town), surveys, posters, annual report, notices or other communications about the Council's work based on text provided; arranging for printing and distribution of these (including About Town) as required, including electronic distribution of newsletter.</li> <li>• Maintenance of the press cuttings file, an electronic file of images and informal archive material, such as donated articles for display in spare office.</li> <li>• Administering the banner booking scheme; together with Assistant Clerk, booking window displays.</li> </ul>
Rangers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To act as a front line, public facing representative of the Council and engage with a wide cross section of the community in a friendly, approachable and enthusiastic manner.</li> <li>• Working with community and volunteer groups to undertake practical activities and tasks on the ground – offering support, supervision, training and encouragement e.g. a litter pick, shrub cutting or grassland management.</li> <li>• Liaising with and assisting groups that have an interest in Stroud's Green Spaces, such as friends' groups, residents' groups and local societies. Our ambition is to expand such activity so the role here is expected to evolve.</li> <li>• Helping to plan and assisting at occasional public events held in or in relation to the town's Green Spaces.</li> <li>• Acting to preserve and promote the good reputation of the Council in all dealings with the public, community groups and others.</li> </ul>
Project Admin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring the provision of helpful, prompt and friendly responses to enquiries, both in person and via telephone and email.</li> <li>• Keeping public notices up to date and maintaining the office display windows and literature carousel.</li> <li>• Support for the organisation of civic events including: Annual Town Meeting, public consultation events and armistice/remembrance services.</li> <li>• Support for the day-to-day maintenance and updating of the Council's website and social media accounts</li> </ul>

## Item 9

### Summary of Cost of Living Crisis Ideas

<b>Request</b>	<b>Recommended response</b>
Assistance with parking costs	No. Too expensive and disincentive to using public transport, walking and cycling. Could promote car sharing?
Potential to work at home for part of the week	Line managers to agree individually, subject to adequate cover being in place for office opening hours.
Potential to increase hours of work (if part-time)	Any changes to be agreed by Personnel Committee subject to consideration of budget implications.
Take home logs from Green Spaces	Green Spaces Manager to approve, but for personal use only.
CBT sessions	Resources and one-to-one sessions should be available on NHS, but there may be long waiting lists. Could potentially purchase written materials for staff to use privately.